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USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;  
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;  
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CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;  
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION STATE OF THE UNION  
ADDRESS/IRAN'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Most Wednesday morning papers front-paged follow-up articles on the bid-rigging scandal engulfing the Japan Defense Facilities Administration Agency (JDFAA), with a liberal Asahi story on "amakudari" (golden parachute) practices involving a large number of JDFAA retirees and construction companies. The noon news programs of most national broadcasters reported on President Bush's State of the Union address.

11. "'Democratization' at the core of US diplomacy" The top-circulation, centrist Yomiuri's Washington-based reporter observed: "President Bush stressed the importance of promoting liberty and democracy by setting an end to tyranny as the goal of US diplomacy. Given that democratic elections have been held in Iraq and the Palestinian territories recently, the US leader appeared anxious to trumpet these accomplishments. His remarks that US national security relies upon democratization across the world signal that the promotion of democracy will continue to be the foremost US diplomatic principle."

12. "US to Place More Emphasis on International Cooperation" The liberal Mainichi's Washington correspondent argued: "By referring to the need to seek cooperation from friends and allies in waging the war on terrorism, President Bush revealed the basic stance of abandoning a unilateral approach in favor of a more 'internationalist' diplomacy. He also called for solidarity with the Iranian people by declaring that the US would be a partner that would help people around the world attain better lives. The remarks highlighted Washington's readiness to help spread democracy.... It seems that the Bush administration's foreign policy is

becoming more favorably disposed to coordination with other nations under the stewardship of Secretary Rice, who has proposed 'realistic idealism' and 'transformational diplomacy.'"

13. "Narrow Path Ahead on Domestic and Diplomatic Fronts" The liberal Asahi's Washington correspondent wrote: "President Bush's State of the Union address focused on the economy and his domestic agenda, as voters appear to be paying closer attention to domestic policy prior to the off-year congressional elections in November. However, he appears to have little leeway in this area because of the spiraling cost of the Iraq war and the ballooning budget deficit brought on by major tax cuts. While stressing diplomatic accomplishments in the first half of the speech, Bush failed to offer a clear-cut vision for US diplomacy. It seems the speech illustrates the tough problems the Bush administration is facing on both the domestic and diplomatic fronts."

14. "Bush Stresses the Importance of US War on Terrorism" Quasi-governmental broadcaster NHK-TV's Washington correspondent Yui observed: "Speaking at a joint session of Congress, President Bush said the US could protect the safety of Americans by demonstrating strong world leadership. The president also showed his firm determination to fight terrorism and sought national understanding concerning the prolonged deployment of US soldiers in Iraq. He criticized Syria, Burma, Zimbabwe, North Korea, and Iran as undemocratic nations, saying that the US would continue to work hard to establish democratic values and principles in the world in order to

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get rid of oppressive governments. With mid-term elections scheduled for this fall, the president, who is concerned about his declining public support, aimed to rebound by emphasizing the US war on terrorism."

15. "President Portrays Himself as Strong Leader to Boost Popularity" TBS-TV's Hino said: "President Bush's annual policy speech came at a time when his approval ratings have barely recovered from a record low. The president sought to boost his popularity by portraying himself as a strong leader. He promised victory in the war on terror and vowed to spread freedom and democracy throughout the world."

16. "Bush Tones Down His Criticism of DPRK" TV-Asahi's Tabata said: "The president touted his idea of a strong America and used the word 'offense' six times in his assurance of victory in the war on terror. Departing from his criticism of North Korea, the US leader referred to the North only once. The brief mention of Pyongyang illustrated a shift in US interest from North Korea to Iran."

17. "Bush Refers to China, India as Economic Rivals" TV-Tokyo's Shimada noticed: "President Bush referred to China and India as economic rivals with the US. The Bush administration has sought to pursue domestic issues such as tax cuts and Social Security reform by trying to scare Americans into thinking that the US will not be able to maintain its competitiveness without them. The president also encouraged research and development concerning new sources of energy so that the US will become less dependent on foreign oil."

18. "P5 Agree on IAEA's Referral of Iranian Nuclear Issue to UNSC" The top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri's London correspondent Iizuka commented (2/1): "The five permanent members of the UN Security Council (UNSC) and Germany agreed Monday in London that the IAEA should report the issue of Iran's nuclear development to the UNSC. Though the move has left Tehran isolated, it is not clear how Russia and China will react to this issue during UNSC

deliberations. A senior State Department official praised the six-nation agreement as epochal and decisive. The official's remarks were also indicative of the US interpretation that winning concessions from Russia and China, which had taken a cautious stance on referring the matter to the UNSC, represented major progress on the issue."

19. "Iran Driven into Tight Corner" Yomiuri's Tehran correspondent Kudo observed (2/1): "Tehran has been in a tight corner following the agreement by the foreign ministers of the P5 and Germany in London that the IAEA should refer the issue of Iran's nuclear program to the UNSC. Attention is now shifting to whether Iran will harden its stance and go ahead with uranium enrichment or become more conciliatory before the regular meeting of IAEA board members scheduled for early March."

SCHIEFFER